

**MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
September 28, 1993**

The regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board was held on September 28, 1993 at 6:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office board room, 200 South Lamar Blvd. Board members present were Sterling Lands, ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres, Phil Friday, Marianne Dwight, Doug Johnston, and Rocky Medrano.

Staff members present were Jesus Olivares, Robert Sopronyi, Stuart Strong, Jody Hamilton, Raymond Lopez, and Dolores Posada.

RECEPTION

Before the meeting was called to order, a small reception honoring former Parks and Recreation Board members was held. Present were James Crump and Neil Iscoe. Others also honored, but unable to attend were Beverly Griffith, Albert Black, Eliza May, and Margaret Reed-Lade.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was call to order at 6:58 p.m. by Sterling Lands, Chair.

CITIZEN'S COMMUNICATION

Mike Workman, member of the Stephan F. Austin Bicentennial committee, addressed the Board and noted to them how the Parks and Recreation Department was involved in the celebration through the Elizabet Ney museum. He invited the Board, staff, and all present to get involved with the celebration of Stephan F. Austin's 200th. birthday, to please the logo at liberty, and to tell friends. The celebration will be held November 3, 1993.

Paul Smith, member of the East Austin coalition and S.T.A.R., and addressed the Board with concerns about the Doris Miller Auditorium and the Givens Recreation Center.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A special presentation of the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) Phases II & III was done by Dr. Chuck Sexton of the Environmental and Conservation Services Department (ECSD). Dr. Sexton introduced other staff members present that were instrumental in working on the BCCP, Tom Engles and Jackie Davis who are biologist also with ECSD and Bill Derryberry from the Financial Services Department.

Karen Hadden, biology teacher, asked Dr. Sexton if he could please provide the source and the author of the study that demonstrates that grazing is a good vegetation control and that hunting should be allowed at the preserve. Ms. Hadden would also like documentation on who the private funding sources for the BCCP are at this point and time. Dr. Sexton stated that at the time there was not a single reference at this time he could cite about the grazing impact, he was citing the general experience of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)

on some of their tracts and he will put her in touch with the appropriate person at TPWD that can help answer her questions on grazing. The same thing in regards to hunting. They know it can be an effective deer herd management tool and it is recognized that in much of the area there is a need for deer management. They are connecting those ideas right now. As for private funding, they cannot identify any single source of private funding right now. They can only anticipate that with future development activity further funding will come. Ms. Hadden mentioned she had seen a flier with a list of corporate sponsors. Mr. Derryberry noted the 3M Corporation and other corporations that had already applied and received their permits.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

ITEMS FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION

Make recommendation to Council regarding approval of the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan Phases II and III.

Robert Singleton addressed the Board and spoke against approval of the BCCP Phases II and III for the following reasons:

1. Economics - the cost is too high
2. Procedure Analysis - we are giving precedence to the weakest watershed ordinance.
3. Hunting and Grazing
4. Expensive Plan

Karen Hadden addressed the Board and spoke against approval of the BCCP Phases II and III for the following reasons:

1. Grazing - endangered plants will be eaten.
2. Hunting - Deer population can take care of itself.
3. TPWD Management - feels TPWD has been less than adequate on some of its property by letting some of parks turn into hunting grounds.
4. Federal Laws should take care of endangered species.

Hank Erb addressed the Board and spoke against approval of the BCCP Phases II and III for the following reasons:

1. It is dependent on the developer agreement.
2. Inadequate plan - the percentage of habitat being saved is below 50%.
3. They threaten Fish and Wildlife will not protect the endangered species if the BCCP is not supported.
4. No regulation of the BCCP land by the City or the County
5. Developer bailout
6. Too Expensive

Mark Gentle addressed the Board and spoke against approval of the BCCP Phases II and III for the following reasons:

1. The Board should take into consideration the indirect cost.

Reverend Lands asked Ms. Hadden what her recommendation as the right solution would be. Ms. Hadden would like to see the Fish and Wildlife Service enforce the endangered species act and with that option it would not cost the City a thing.

Reverend Lands asked Mr. Erb what his recommendation as the right solution would be. Mr. Erb stated regulation of the land, the condemnation, and no fragmentation of the habitat.

Reverend Lands asked Mr. Singleton what his recommendation as the right solution would be. Mr. Singleton stated no development in southwest Travis County and digging up and re-vegetating what is already up there.

Doug Johnson asked Mr. Singleton if he thinks the Endangered Species Act is not strong enough. Mr. Singleton replied the Section 7 and 10A process allow development to go on that should not happen. No land with endangered species should be developed.

Phil Friday stated he was concerned with the following issue:

1. City ownership and management of land; what lands will the City maintain and keep ownership of.
2. What lands the city already owns will be subject to the BCCP management guidelines.
3. Portion of Uplands that is worth holding back out of the BCCP as a park.
4. Limitation on the City's obligation for management cost.

Rocky Medrano he was concerned with the following issue:

1. He agrees with all of Mr. Friday's concerns
2. Fish and Wildlife Service not enforcing the Endangered Species Act if there was no plan.

Marianne Dwight she was concerned with the following issue:

1. Is the use of lands deeded to us being done properly; no information on what the appropriate use is or what access should and should not be for those lands.
2. Management of park land; anything deeded to the Department, it is liable for and we need to be prepare for that.

Phil Friday moved the City retain ownership and management in addition to the twelve park land tracts that are clarified in the presentation of the Barton Creek Wilderness Park, the Hanks Tract, the Lanier Tract, the Senna Hills Tract, the Franklin Federal "151" Tract that are shown on the following page of the presentation.

Doug Johnston seconded the motion.

The vote was 5-0-1. Marianne Dwight abstained.

Phil Friday moved the following resolution:

**City of Austin Parkland and
the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan**

WHEREAS the current draft of the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan

(BCCP) calls for the City of Austin to designate approximately 2,500 acres of its dedicated park land to be included within the BCCP Preserve Area; and

WHEREAS this dedicated parkland includes several much-used City Parks, including the Barton Creek Greenbelt, Emma Long Park (City Park), Bull Creek Greenbelt and Bull Creek District Park; and

WHEREAS the draft BCCP does not now clearly specify that the City of Austin will retain ownership and management control over this parkland; and

WHEREAS the draft Management Standards and guidelines of the BCCP contain restrictions on public access which may impact existing park uses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks and Recreation Board recommends as follows:

1. The City of Austin should insist that the official BCCP be clarified so as to state plainly that the City will retain ownership and management control over all of its dedicated parkland including the Barton Creek Wilderness, Hanks Tract, Lanier Tract, Senna Hills Tract, and Franklin Federal ("151") Tract; and

2. The City of Austin should insist the the BCCP clearly specify that BCCP Management Standards and Guidelines will apply only to those portions of City Parkland wherein habitat have been confirmed; and

3. In the event the BCCP is adopted by the City of Austin, the Parks and Recreation Department should, whenever possible, interpret the BCCP Management Guidelines in favor of permitting all existing public uses.

Doug Johnston seconded the motion.

The vote was 5-0-1. Marianne Dwight abstained.

Phil Friday moved the Board recommend to Council that if Council acquires Uplands that the carve out of the Uplands the two hundred acre portion and retain City ownership and management of the two hundred acre portion as a park before conveying the remainder of the Uplands to TPWD.

Doug Johnston seconded the motion.

Mr. Johnston asked if that was carved out and the remainder left for the BCCP, is there still an ability to have a continuous trail that goes all the way up the Greenbelt or will that be subject to the BCCP management. Mr. Friday stated that it will be subject to BCCP management.

Mr. Friday amended the motion to recommend that the City hold back the area on either side of the creek all the way through the tract. Mr. Friday restated the motion to recommend that the City Council keep ownership and management of the two hundred acres out of Uplands and of the 1000 foot setback along the Creek passing through Uplands and connecting the Sweetwater Ranch.

Doug Johnston accepted the friendly amendment.

Dr. Sexton asked the Board for what purpose would the City want to retain those

lands. If it is literally to be held out by the City of Austin to be used for something other than BCCP without respective habitat management or habitat value, but instead use it as a public park, the Fish and Wildlife Service will want the Department to acquire the same amount of land to compensated or to build the Department preserve system back up to what they had anticipated it to be. If it is land that is particularly to be retained and managed by the City under the BCCP guidelines and yet reserve the rights for recreational compatible uses that would put it in a different light. Mr. Friday stated that it was his intention to pull out the land completely and to have the total acreage be modest enough so that the problem Mr. Sexton had raised would not be felt to be a major problem. He asked Stuart Strong what were the widths along the Barton Creek Greenbelt beginning at the pool and around the lower creek. Mr. Strong stated they were approximately a minimum 300 or 400 feet and would go in excess of 1000 feet. Jesus Olivares stated it abuts properties in some areas. Mr. Olivares asked Dr. Sexton if the property is turned over to the TPWD is it his opinion a good statement to be made that it is going to be made available, based on if there is any potential for public access, to connect the Barton Creek Greenbelt. Mr. Sexton noted he could not speak for TPWD, but he would anticipate that they would definite consider that. He stated TPWD did recognize that the Barton Creek Greenway Plan existed, what it was, how it was designed, and what the goal of it was and he did not anticipate them to designated to as endangered species habitat. Mr. Johnston asked Dr. Sexton to clarify from the earlier presentation that the Department was to get credit for some of the land in Emma Long Metro Park, but did that mean to get the credit if they decided that some of the uses there were now are not compatible to the habitat would they be restricted. Bicycling, for example, is allowed there now and may not be compatible to some of the habitat, would it be restricted. Dr. Sexton noted it may be a possible eventuality. Mr. Johnston then stated the only way to make sure it did not happen, was to hold the land back. Again, Dr. Sexton stated the land would have to be compensated. Mr. Friday stated it was not written in the BCCP area had to be 29,000 acres as it is now stated and that the number could be expanded or contracted depending upon the overall policy decision about it. Dr. Sexton disagreed it could be contracted and explained ECSD had already heard biological opinion of the Fish and Wildlife Service that BCCP was at the biological minimum for the acreage and more recently they said what they really thought they needed was an additional 5000 acres for your preserve system. At the instigation of the Secretary of the Interior, the Fish and Wildlife Service stepped up and said to put you in the volume, we are going to come up with the additional 5000 acres and that was an additional requirement, so we are not in a position to go down on acreage. Mr. Friday asked if it was not the case there were also several other participates in the plan and the plan also contemplates that land may be donated from private sources to make the total acreage, such as Travis County and the LCRA. Therefore, it was not solely upon the City to make up the land quota. He also stated that in terms of land quota, it was only within the last 30 days anyone suggested that the Lanier, Franklin, Senna Hills, and the Hanks tract would go into this deal. Dr. Sexton stated Mr. Friday was correct that it was only in the last 30 days that the idea of turning ownership over to TPWD arose. There has not been the detailed discussion that the Board has engaged in tonight to put some definition on that and what list of properties would stay and which would go. Mr. Friday stated that in the last major draft plans of last February, the City of Austin contribution was limited to 12 tracts consisting of 2500 acres and these four tracts were not even mentioned as part of the City's contribution. Dr. Sexton stated to his knowledge those tracts were acquired with BCCP bond money and were known to be

targeted for the BCCP. Mr. Friday stated it had been purchased for park land. Dr. Sexton stated he would find where the money came from. Mr. Friday also stated that the new Barton Creek Wilderness Park was not contemplated as part of the City's land donation. He also stated the reason TPWD had been chosen to manage the BCCP was because there personnel was more environmental and more biologically focused. Mr. Friday stated the reason the Board should hold back is because the Parks Department will manage more for the sake of City park users than TPWD and also suggested that the money for the management is going to be a problem and that when the funding runs low, TPWD will be bound to manage the park land for endangered species. If the City holds something back based on a policy decision, then the Department will take care of the park land out of its normal budget.

Reverend Lands asked Mr. Friday state the motion again.

Mr. Friday stated the Board recommend to Council that if the City acquires the Uplands that it hold back from the BCCP retain ownership and management free from BCCP management guidelines the approximately 200 hundred acre portion shown on the map and a 1000 foot set back along the Barton Creek flowing through the Uplands and abutting the Sweetwater Ranch.

Mr. Johnston asked to have clarified if the 1000 foot set back was on each side. Mr. Friday stated it did.

The vote was 5-0-1. Marianne Dwight abstained.

Phil Friday moved that the City of Austin in its contract with TPWD limit its liability to contribute towards the management to the amount of money raised in BCCP revenue in the form of mitigation fees or other revenue.

Marianne Dwight seconded the motion.

The vote was 6-0.

Make recommendation to Council regarding approval of naming the practice baseball field adjacent to Austin High School for R. D. Thorp.

ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres, member of the Land and Facility Committee and the Programs Committee, stated both of the committees recommended the approval of the above item.

The vote was 5-0.

Make recommendation to Council regarding approval of proposed Harris Branch MUD Consent Agreement amendments regarding parks and recreational facility requirements.

Phil Friday moved the Board accept the Directors recommendation in this regard on the condition that the City in its contract with the Harris Branch MUD obtain a binding commitment from the MUD that they will manage in perpetuity the 123 acres of greenbelt for public benefit at their expense and their liability.

Doug Johnston seconded the motion.

Mr. Friday explained that this item came under a policy the Board had adopted earlier that creates a ratio between the density of the MUD, how many people per acre and depending on how dense it is the MUD is obliged to donate a certain amount of land. In this case, when the MUD first applied the density was much heavier. Because the demand on the City has dropped, the MUD has re-applied for a less dense deal and the amount of proportion of land the MUD has to donate has gone down. The Director and Stuart Strong have recommended that it now be 179 acres. Out of that, the City is going to receive a 56 acre tract dedicated as park land. The Department recommends the remaining 123 acres not be deeded to the City, but instead the agreement would specifically state they would still own it, but they would manage it for public access and perpetuity. That would not fit the policy, but Mr. Strong recommended that if the MUD would take responsibility for the management, the upkeep, and the liability, it would be better for the Department as long as it is still available for the general public. At Mr. Friday's request Mr. Strong clarified the issue by stating anyone would still be able to go there and use the park land but the expense would be the MUD's responsibility. The City would get the same product, but the MUD would pay.

The vote was 5-0.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Election of Officers

Reverend Lands asked the records show that two Board members were absent. Ron Cartlidge and Eleanor McKinney.

The Reverend asked the Board if they should proceed with the elections even though two members were absent.

Rocky Medrano moved the Board table the election until all Board members were present or at least for one more member to be present to have an odd number and that the election be on a ballot.

Marianne Dwight seconded the motion.

The Reverend thought it would be in the best interest of the Board to have everyone present to have the election, regardless of the results. Marianne Dwight agreed. Doug Johnson felt not all members would be at all meetings. Ms. Dwight pointed out Mr. Black had resigned, but that Mr. Cartlidge and Ms. McKinney attended Board meetings regularly. Mr. Johnson asked if there was a possibility that the Board members could cast a vote, turn it in to Ms. Hamilton, and at the next meeting the results would be posted. Ms. Hamilton stated there might be a possibility of them doing a paper ballot. She stated they could not do a proxy vote as Mr. Johnson had asked earlier, but they could do a paper ballot and mail it in to her before the next meeting.

Mr. Medrano added a friendly amendment to his motion that the election be tabled until the next meeting and those who do not plan on being present will have the option to mail it in or drop it off by paper ballot.

Mr. Johnson suggested the Board should vote for Chair by paper ballot and vote on the rest of the offices at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Cruz-Torres stated she did not like secret ballots. Reverend Lands stated it was everyone's right to vote as they choose. Mr. Johnson asked if she wanted to move to vote right now. She stated yes or next week as moved by Mr. Medrano. She just did not want anyone to miss out on voting. The Reverend stated those not present would receive a paper ballot with instruction and everyone would have an opportunity whether they attend the next meeting or not. Mr. Johnson stated he had not been given that opportunity the first time the Board tried to vote, but that was fine. Ms. Cruz-Torres asked if they wanted to be public with their votes, could they do it now. Reverend Lands stated yes.

ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres voted for Phil Friday, Chair, Marianne Dwight, Vice-Chair, and Ron Cartlidge, Secretary/Parliamentarian.

The Reverend asked the records so show and stated to the rest of the Board members they had could vote at the next meeting or return the ballots to Ms. Hamilton prior to the next meeting.

Phil Friday added a friendly amendment and stated the simplest thing to do was to take a secret ballot that has to be submitted by 6:30 p.m. two weeks from tonight on the question on the Chair on the nominees now on the floor and get a decision on that first, then at the next meeting vote on the rest of the offices in the customary way, with nominations and a vote at that time.

Mr. Medrano accepted the amendment. Phil Friday seconded the motion.

The vote was 4-0-1. ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres abstained.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Jesus Olivares, Deputy Director, stated there was not a Director's Report at this time.

Stuart Strong gave a presentation to the Board regarding the information on the investment throughout the park system that the Board requested at the Board Retreat. The Department is in the process of updating the investment inventory. The information handed out is the latest and it was done in 1988.

Mr. Olivares thanked everyone who attended the opening ceremonies for the Greater East Austin Youth Flag Football League on Saturday and invited everyone to the "Senior Beacon Bash" party at Zilker Park on Friday.

Mr. Olivares noted the Department needed more Board members on the Programs Committee.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres stated she had attended the opening ceremonies and she had tried to contact everyone or at least left a message. That day she also had the opportunity to travel to San Antonio and attend a tournament the Montopolis boxing team participated in and did well. While driving back she thought of things that could be done at Montopolis. She spoke to Domitillo Ponce at Montopolis about expansion of the boxing and the karate program. She wanted to mention that recreation centers, PARD personnel, Park Police, neighborhood

parks, and anything else pertaining to PARD are still alive and well, but she is still concerned about them, the Board needs to discuss these issues also.

Doug Johnson mentioned that the fence for the Zilker Gardens was to be on the agenda for the next meeting. He is very committed to the Zilker Loop and invited the Board to meet with him and have a walk of the Zilker Loop or to talk about it and how it will benefit the City.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ErmaLinda Cruz-Torres moved the minutes of the regular meeting on September 14, 1993 be approved.

Phil Friday seconded the motion.

The vote was 6-0.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Audio tapes of the Parks and Recreation Board meetings are available through the Director of Parks and Recreation, 499-6717.